

## Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT  
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USLO RIYADH

S E C R E T STATE 122252

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MR, MASS, SS

SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON AF ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY SCHAUFEE

1. MAURITANIAN AMBASSADOR KOCHMAN CALLED ON AF ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY SCHAUFEE MAY 24. AF/W COUNTRY OFFICER  
ATTENDED MEETING.

2. SCHAUFEE OPENED WITH REGRET THAT WE HAD BEEN  
UNABLE TO ARRANGE APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER FOR  
MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH.

3. AMBASSADOR KOCHMAN SAID HE USUALLY CALLED ON SCHAUFEE  
WITHOUT SERIOUS PROBLEMS TO DISCUSS, BUT TODAY WAS  
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DIFFERENT. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH, WHOM KOCHMAN WOULD  
SEE AT THE MAY 30 CLUB DES AMIS DU SAHEL MEETING IN  
OTTAWA, WOULD SURELY ASK HIM HOW MAURITANIA STANDS IN  
UNITED STATES AFRICAN POLICY. HAS THERE BEEN A USG  
REASSESSMENT? THERE ARE MANY MATTERS OF OVERALL  
INTEREST CONCERNING NORTHWEST AFRICA THAT OUR TWO  
NATIONS HAVE NOT HAD A CHANCE TO DISCUSS AT THE HIGHEST

LEVEL, AND IT WAS REGRETTABLE THAT PRESENT OPPORTUNITY WAS LOST. THE UNITED STATES MAINTAINS NEUTRALITY ON THE WESTERN SAHARA DISPUTE, BUT AT THE SAME TIME SEEMS

TO HAVE A PRIVILEGED RELATIONSHIP WITH MOROCCO. IT IS DIFFERENT WITH MAURITANIA, WHICH IS APPARENTLY SOMEWHAT "OUT OF IT". THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS AWARE THAT OVER THE PAST YEAR AND HALF MAURITANIAN FOREIGN POLICY HAS SHIFTED SOMEWHAT IN A DIRECTION FAVORABLE TO THE UNITED STATES, BUT WHAT HAS BEEN THE RESULT? ALTHOUGH MAURITANIA IS NOT LARGE OR POWERFUL, THERE ARE OTHER CONSIDERATIONS WHICH THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH MAURITANIA. KOCHMAN CONCLUDED THAT "THESE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS" PERHAPS REQUIRED A REEXAMINATION OF A SITUATION IN WHICH MAURITANIA SEEMS TO HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES BUT LITTLE ELSE. KOCHMAN WANTED TO KNOW HOW HE COULD REASSURE PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH.

4. SCHAUFLE ASSURED KOCHMAN THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S SCHEDULE SIMPLY WAS FILLED UP DURING THE PERIOD OULD DADDAH HAD PROPOSED. OTHER PRESIDENTS HAD SOUGHT AND COULD NOT OBTAIN VISITS DURING THE SAME TIME FRAME. SCHAUFLE SAID THAT AS FAR AS OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP IS CONCERNED, HE WOULD GO BACK A FEW YEARS TO NOTE THAT AT THE TIME MOROCCO CLAIMED ALL OF MAURITANIA AS ITS OWN TERRITORY, THE UNITED STATES, WHICH HAD A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH MOROCCO HAD ENCOURAGED NEGOTIATION PROCESS RESULTING IN SUPPORT FOR MAURITANIA. WE

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ARE OFFICIALLY NEUTRAL ON WESTERN SAHARA, BUT OUR VOTES ON THE TWO COMPETING WESTERN SAHARA RESOLUTIONS IN THE UNGA IN 1975 MEANT SOMETHING. WE KNOW WHO OUR FRIENDS ARE, BUT IF WE PAY TOO MUCH DIRECT ATTENTION WE RISK BEING TAKEN AS INVOLVING OURSELVES TOO OPENLY. SCHAUFLE WENT ON TO POINT OUT THE IMPORTANCE FOR MAURITANIA OF USG SUPPORT FOR THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, AND REFERRED TO CURRENT DROUGHT FOOD AID FOR MAURITANIA FROM THE UNITED STATES AND OTHERS. HE AFFIRMED THAT WE HAVE CAREFULLY NOTED MAURITANIA'S CHANGE IN POLITICAL ATTITUDES OVER THE PAST YEAR AND A HALF, THAT WE DO NOT IGNORE MAURITANIA'S IMPORTANT GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION, AND THAT WE CONSIDER OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MAURITANIA TO BE VERY IMPORTANT.

5. WITHOUT DIRECT RESPONSE, KOCHMAN ASKED IF THE UNITED STATES COULD HELP MAURITANIA IN SOME SECURITY ASSISTANCE WAY, WHICH WOULD BE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED. WOULD SUCH AID HAVE TO BE COMMERCIAL, OR COULD IT BE

GRANT? SCHAUFLE SAID THAT WE COULD DISCUSS THIS, BUT  
THE MAURITANIANS MUST BEAR IN MIND THE LIMITATIONS  
IMPOSED BY OUR NEW ARMS TRANSFER POLICY. HE SUGGESTED  
THERE MIGHT BE OTHER WAYS TO MEET MAURITANIA'S BASIC  
NEEDS FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE, SUCH AS COOPERATION AND  
PERHAPS FINANCING BY SAUDI ARABIA. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PFOR, MASS, MR, SS, US, (SCHAUFELLE, WILLIAM E JR), (KOCHMAN)  
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